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Notes on the genus *Aganope* Miq. (Leguminosae)

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Abstract

Aganope Miq., treated as a section under the genus *Derris* Lour. is now recognised as a distinct genus. Consequently a few of the Indian taxa of *Derris* require name changes which are effected after discussion.

Miquel (1855) established *Aganope* as a distinct genus, based on *A. floribunda* Miq. Bentham (1860) reduced it to a section under *Derris* Lour. and placed it in the tribe Dalbergieae. Prain (1897), Ridley (1922) and Thothathri (1961) followed Bentham's concept in treating *Aganope* as one of the sections of *Derris.*

Polhill (1971) after critical studies on the two genera restored *Aganope* to its original generic status and included it in the tribe Dalbergieae and subsequently in Tephrosieae (Polhill, 1981). According to him the wing petals of *Aganope* are not obviously adherent to the keels in the lower half as in the species of *Derris* and that the hilum of the seeds is markedly eccentric with radicular lobes undeveloped and the radicle spreading in mature seeds, as against the submedial hilum with incurved radicle in species of *Derris.* Geesink (1984), on the contrary, merged *Aganope* under *Ostryocarpus,* an African genus of the tribe Millettieae. The three Indian taxa of *Derris* sect. *Aganope*, viz. *D. thyrsiflora* Benth. var. *eualata* (Bedd.) Thoth., *D. thyrsiflora* Benth. var. *wallichii* (Prain) Thoth., and *D. polystachya* Benth. were studied in detail and the authors are convinced that the section *Aganope* deserves to be treated as an independent genusfrom *Derris.*

Regarding the systematic position of *Aganope*, it was first placed in Dalbergieae (Bentham, 1860). Later it was brought to Tephrosieae (Polhill, 1971) along with *Derris* Lour., *Pongamia* Vent., etc. as the main character of dehiscent pods in Tephrosieae vis-a-vis indehiscent pods in Dalbergieae was no longer considered to be a valid and stable character. Again the name Millettieae (Miquel, 1855) is older than Tephrosieae (Bentham, 1865). *Aganope*, as a genus, is therefore placed in tribe Millettieae.

The consequent name changes in a few of the Indian species of *Aganope* which were described under *Derris* sect. *Aganope* are given below:

Aganope polystachya (Benth.) Thoth. & Das, *comb. nov.*

Derris polystachya Benth., Jour. Linn. Soc. 4 (suppl.): 114. 1860; Baker in Hook. f., Fl. Brit. India 2: 247. 1878; Thoth., Bull. Bot. Surv. India. 3: 197. 1961 & Rec. Bot. Surv. India 20 (2): 71. 1973.

A climbing shrub, confined to the lower elevations of Eastern Himalaya.

Distribution: India (Assam, Sikkim), Bhutan.

Aganope thyrsiflora (Benth.) Polhill var. **eualata** (Bedd.) Thoth. & Das, *comb. nov.*

Derris eualata Bedd., Ic. Pl. Ind. Or. 42. t. 186. 1874. *D. platyptera* Baker in Hook. f., Fl. Brit. India 2: 246. 1878. *D. thyrsiflora* Benth. var *eualata* (Bedd.) Thoth., Bull. Bot. Surv. India 3: 195. 1961.

A gigantic climber with silky branches.

Distribution: India: Karnataka, Kerala.

Aganope thyrsiflora (Benth.) Polhill var. **wallichii** (Prain) Thoth. & Das, *comb. nov.*

Derris wallichii Prain, Jour. Asiat. Soc. Beng. 66: 99. 1897; Parkinson, Fl. Andaman Isl. 148. 1929. *D. thyrsiflora* Benth. var. *wallichii* (Prain) Thoth., Bull. Bot. Surv. India. 3: 196. 1961.

Variation in habit of this plant are quite interesting. Generally the species is a large climber in the rainforest, growing upto 20-25 m high over other trees. In secondary forests it grows into a shrub of 3-5 m.

Distribution: India (Assam, Andaman Islands), Bangladesh, Malaysia.

Aganope thyrsiflora (Benth.) Polhill and the two varieties mentioned above can be distinguished by the following key.

1a. Flowers shortly pedicellate (1.0 -1-5 mm); pods upto 9cm long..... ... ...var. *thyrsiflora*

1b. Flowers distinctly pedicellate (3.0-4.0 mm); pods 11-13 cm long.....2

2a. Leaflets 7 - 9, ovato-oblong, thin; calyx cup silky..... ....var. *wallichii*

2b. Leaflets 9, oblong, sub - coriaceous; calyx cup pubescent. .....var. *eualata*

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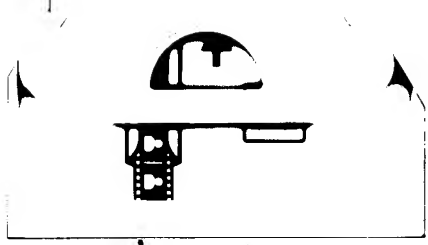
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